



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**SANTA ROSA COUNTY RESIDENTS REMINDED TO TAKE PRECAUTIONS
TO PREVENT MOSQUITO BORNE ILLNESSES**

Milton, FL - As the weather gets warmer and days grow longer, we begin to enjoy more outside activities such as cooking outside, gardening, walking and riding bicycles. But the same mild weather that encourages us to be more active also makes mosquitoes more active. The Santa Rosa County Health Department advises residents to take precautions to avoid being bitten by these pests.

Mosquitoes can cause more than annoying, itching bites. They can also carry illnesses like West Nile Virus, Eastern Equine Encephalitis, Saint Louis Encephalitis and Dengue Fever. While many people know that birds can contract West Nile Virus, they may not realize that domestic animals such as cats, dogs and horses can also be at risk.

The best way to protect yourself and your pets from mosquito borne diseases is to practice the "Five D's":

- **DUSK and DAWN** - Avoid being outdoors when mosquitoes are most active. For most species this is at sunrise and sunset.
- **DRESS** - Wear clothing that covers most of your skin.
- **DEET** - Use repellents containing DEET. Picaridin and oil of lemon eucalyptus are other options. Always read labels and apply repellents as directed.
- **DRAIN** - Check around your home to be sure there are no areas of standing water or water filled containers where mosquitoes can lay their eggs.

[For more information on mosquito borne illnesses, visit our website at http://healthysantarosa.com/di-epidemiology.html#Arboviruses](http://healthysantarosa.com/di-epidemiology.html#Arboviruses), or the Centers for Disease Control website at <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/list.mosquitoborne.htm>.

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